

PLACE MATTERS digest

NOTHING MATTERS MORE TO A CHILD THAN A PLACE TO CALL HOME

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



DHR Interim Secretary Brian Wilbon, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, BCDSS Director Molly McGrath
Baltimore City Council President, Bernard Young, Baltimore City Councilwoman, Belinda Conaway and our Fabulous Youth

1st Annual Golf Tournament

Helping Youth be Ready by 21



In August, the Baltimore City Department of Social Services' (BCDSS) Director, Molly McGrath and members of her staff hosted the 1st Helping Youth Be Ready by 21 Golf Tournament at Forest Park Golf Course and Club-House. BCDSS was honored that Department of Human Resources Interim Secretary, Brian Wilbon made time to serve as Ambassador for the

event and led the group of more than 100 participants in a round of golf.

Designed to heighten awareness of the need for active involvement with youth 12 and over, this outing paired foster youth-in-care with members of area businesses, government and university communities for a morning of fun. Teaming seasoned golfers with Baltimore City foster care youth, created opportunities to meet a few of our fabulous youth-in-care, exchange experiences and learn about the programs and services BCDSS offers. Youth enjoyed one-on-one coaching to enhance their golf skills. (*continued on pg 2*)

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Let's Play Golf!



The youth and their teams head out to play!



Molly McGrath, Director

Get your Enoch Pratt library card by clicking

http://www.prattlibrary.org/uploadedFiles/www/find_answers/library_cards/Library_Card_Application.pdf

Lack of Sleep for Young Kids Linked to Obesity Later in Life

Research has shown that people who sleep a good 8 or more hours are more likely to maintain a normal weight than those who sleep less than 8 hours a night. A new study finds that even for infants and preschoolers, a good, long night's sleep may be just as important as diet and physical activity.

Read the full story at

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=129636783>



A Message from the Director

Our children are back in school, the weather is beginning to change and before you know it – the holidays will be here. Remember to share a healthy breakfast with your children to jump start the day. They'll do better at school and you'll be better prepared to tackle daily tasks. As temperatures fall, consider trying a couple of the energy conservation tips to keep your family safe and warm (*see back pg for tips*). As we enter the season of harvest, thanksgiving and joy, please take the time to celebrate life. Although we have faced numerous challenges throughout the year, we are fortunate to have opportunities to share special moments together. The Baltimore City Department of Social Services gives thanks for you – our extended family. Have a productive school year and wonderful holiday season!

Cont. from pg 1 Golf Tournament



In addition to several individuals requesting more information about becoming a foster parent, a few youth were invited to visit area businesses to learn about specific career paths. Throughout the event youth were not only developing their golf skills, but networking with professionals to learn about employment, internship and educational opportunities.

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake attended the opening session greeting the youth and golfers prior to tee-off. Council President

Bernard Young also stopped by to extend well wishes. Among the many distinguished participants were Councilwoman Belinda Conaway, Jayne Miller of WBAL and several Baltimore City Firefighters.

BCDSS extends sincere thanks to our tournament sponsors: Maximus, Repax, Gantech, J4P, Charter Financial Group, ACS, Adsystech, Policy Studies Institute and Angarai International. Tee-sign sponsors for the event also included: Data Networks, Roman's Place and the BCDSS Commission.



KidsPeace® KidsPeace Invites you to "Put your Best Face On" for Baltimore's Foster Teens. Join us for a fun event for children and adults of all ages. Wear your Halloween costumes, dress up as a family (and that includes your 4 legged family members too) and walk or run for a great cause.

Foster families and foster children walk free

Saturday, October 30, 2010

Throughout the neighborhoods of Canton and Patterson Park and ending in O'Donnell Square

To become a sponsor and for more information, contact Erin Doyle at 410-964-9329 or visit their website at www.kidspeace.org.

Ready by 21 has a New Program Manager & Partnership

Britnie O'Hara, a former child advocate, has joined the team and will focus on ensuring that all young persons will be fully ready for adulthood. She is excited about the enthusiastic and dedicated team that she will be working with and looks forward to the great opportunities that will be available for our youth.

She can be reached at 443-423-6125.



As part of its Ready by 21 initiative, the Baltimore City Department of Social Services has teamed up with The Family League of Baltimore, Inc. and nine other organizations to develop community and school-based work opportunities for youth in care.

There is a wide array of job opportunities and fields including office administration, home improvement, hospitality, education, information technology, maintenance, retail, landscaping, and the performing arts. Days and hours will vary as some are solely after school work opportunities while others require day availability. Most of the available positions will enable young persons to gain 6 – 10 hours of paid work

The organization offering jobs are:

- Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (HEBCAC)
- Learning, Inc.
- Urban Alliance
- Community Law in Action (CLIA)
- The Parks and People Foundation
- Child First Authority
- Chesapeake Center for Youth Development (CCYD)
- Baltimore Urban Debate League (BUDL)
- Mayor's Office of Employment Development

For more information on how to apply contact Ms. Britnie O'Hara at 443-423-6125.

Nation's 1st PTA for Foster Parents

In an effort to help confront a perpetual problem for foster youth, lack of parental involvement in their schools and education, foster parent leaders in Maryland have created what may be the nation's first PTA for foster parents. The PTA will focus on advocacy, concentrating on issues such as: the effect of traumatic experiences on student performance and behavior; continuing education while transitioning out of foster care and gaps in educational achievement between foster and non-foster youth. For more information on how you can get involved, please contact PTA President, Sam Macer at sammacer@aol.com or via Cell # 410-916-7276.

Importance of Breakfast Facts for Students

- The first point that comes to mind while thinking about importance of breakfast for kids is that breakfast helps in their overall learning process. Students have a busy time in school where they not only learn different subjects but also indulge in extracurricular activities. For doing these activities, they need energy which comes from glucose that breakfast provides. Moreover, eating breakfast regularly also helps in weight management which can reduce the risk of child obesity which has become a common problem in recent times due to unhealthy eating habits.



- Students who have the habit of eating breakfast have been reported to have better concentration during lessons than those who do not. Breakfast is also beneficial for the memory of the students as they are able to remember and retrieve already learned information quickly as well as accurately. Even their problem solving ability is enhanced by eating breakfast on a regular basis.

- Studies have shown that there is a direct correlation between eating breakfast and test scores. It has been shown that students who have their breakfast regularly score better in their tests than those who avoid eating breakfast. As a healthy breakfast offers 1/4 of the nutrition that the body requires, there are less chances that children will indulge in binge eating foods, like, fast foods which are not good for their health. Rather, they are likely to choose foods that are healthier as well as nutritious, later in the day.

Read more at

<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/importance-of-breakfast-for-students.html>

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<http://www.fostercaremonth.org/Pages/default.aspx>



Meet Desiree

Desiree is an adorable 11 year old girl who enjoys nothing more than Mommy-Daughter activities. Her favorite past-times are playing with dolls, having tea parties, playing dress up and being read her favorite books. She also likes dogs and cats.

Desiree would benefit from a family that has the time and commitment to reinforce her sense of safety and security and provide her with a structured, orderly life.

Desiree loves the holiday season, mostly because her birthday is the week before Christmas!

The forever family for Desiree would need to have the patience to demonstrate to her that adults can keep their promises. Trust needs to be shown to Desiree not just spoken of.

Desiree would thrive in a home where she is the youngest child in the household.

It's Cold and Flu Season- Be Prepared!

Get vaccinated for influenza

All children six months and older should receive the flu shot every year. Although two influenza vaccines were recommended last year, only a single trivalent vaccine is being manufactured for the current 2010-2011 seasonal influenza season- this vaccine includes protection against the H1N1 flu.

Hand washing can prevent infection



Teach kids to wash hands often and for at least 15 seconds.

Don't get others sick- Cover your coughs and sneezes

Teach kids to use their elbow to catch their cough or sneeze in stead of their hands. Remember most cold and flu infections cause a mild illness and do not require treatment. If you think your child needs medical treatment, call your pediatrician's office to seek advice.



Symptoms of the flu include:

- Headache
- Sore throat
- Body aches and extreme fatigue (tiredness)
- Coughing, sneezing, runny nose

Most children recover from the flu in 3 to 5 days without any problems

Treat flu symptoms with acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) and make sure your child is drinking lots of fluids to prevent dehydration. Cough and cold medicine should not be given to children less than 5 years of age.

For additional information go to:

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/Symptom-Checker/Pages/Colds.aspx>

Energy Savings Tips for the Fall and Winter Months

As a means of reducing energy costs, the following tips are provided by the Fuel Fund of Maryland:

During the past several years most residential utility customers have experienced a significant increase in their energy bills.

- Turn down the thermostat. Each degree saves approximately 2% on the heating bill.
- Check the filter monthly if you have a warm air furnace or heat pump. Having a clean filter either by replacing it or cleaning it will promote better air flow and reduce use.
- Keep furniture and drapes away from the radiators, heating registers and return vents so that air flows better and heat can get into a room.
- Use drapes. Open the drapes during the day on windows that face the sun. Keep the drapes closed at night to reduce drafts and heating costs.
- If you have a dishwasher, only wash full loads and use energy saving cycles and the air-dry feature if available.
- If you wash dishes by hand, rinse the dishes in groups instead of individually so that water is not constantly running.
- Use toaster ovens, microwaves and crock pots when cooking small to medium-sized meals as they use less energy than the stove and oven.
- Keep the inside of your microwave clean so that it cooks more efficiently.
- Cook with the smallest pans possible so that less energy is used to heat them.
- Use glass or ceramic baking pans instead of aluminum/metal baking pans as they use less energy to bake.
- Never use your stove or oven as a source of heat for your home.
- Cover and wrap food when placing in the refrigerator. This will reduce moisture buildup in the refrigerator and will require less energy.
- Check the seals on your refrigerator door by closing the door on a piece of paper that is half in and half out of the refrigerator. If the paper falls without opening the door or you can remove the paper easily without opening the door, you may need to adjust the door latch or replace the door seals.
- Switch your regular light bulbs to compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) to save energy costs. CFLs use less electricity and last ten times longer than incandescent bulbs.
- Clean the dust from your lightbulbs to improve light output.
- Purchase ENERGY STAR qualified products when replacing older appliances as they meet federal criteria for energy efficiency.